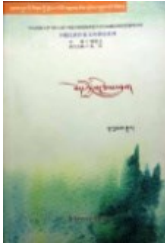


REVIEW: *BELOVED TIBETAN CHILDREN* BY LHA BYAMS RGYAL

Reviewed by Kelsang Norbu (Skal bzang nor bu སྐལ་བཟང་ནོར་བུ།

Gesang Nuobu 格桑诺布)



Lha byams rgyal ལྷ་བྱམས་རྒྱལ། 2012. *Bod kyi gces phrug* བོད་
 ཁྱིམ་ཅེས་སྟུག་ [Beloved Tibetan Children]. Pe cing བེ་ཅིང་།
 [Beijing 北京]: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang མི་རིགས་དཔེ་སྐྱུན་ཁང་།
 [Minzu chubanshe] 民族出版社 [Nationalities Press].
 366pp. ISBN 978-7-105-12243-1/I (paperback 24RMB).

INTRODUCTION

Lha byams rgyal (b. 1977), a prolific contemporary Tibetan writer, attended his village primary school and later, the junior and senior middle schools in the Khri ka (Guide) county seat, where he studied both Tibetan and Chinese. He received his BA and MA degrees in Tibetan Literature from Zhongyang minzu daxue 'Central Nationalities University' in Beijing. Later in Chengdu at Xinan minzu daxue 'Southwest Nationalities University', he was awarded a PhD. Since 2006, he has worked in the Religious Studies Section of the Tibetology Center in Beijing. While Lha byams rgyal's official job is that of a researcher (he has several related publications),¹ he is best known to Tibetan readers as a dedicated native-language author.

Lha byams rgyal began publishing short stories and novels in the late 1990s. Much of his writing is collected in *Lam gyi nyi 'od*

[†]Kelsang Norbu (Skal bzang nor bu). 2019. Review: Lha byams rgyal's *Beloved Tibetan Children* by Lha byams rgyal. *Asian Highlands Perspectives* 58:471-499.

¹ See Pad ma phag mo rta mgrin (2018:60-63) for a list of Lha byams rgyal's publications.

'*Sunlight on the Road*', a collection of twelve of his early short stories;¹ *Lha byams rgyal gyi sgrung 'bring phyogs bsgrigs 'Collection of Lha byams rgyal's Novellas'* (2016) that features three selections, one of which is *Sunlight on the Road*; *Gnyid du yur ba'i chu-sgrung thung phyogs bsgrigs 'The Sleeping Stream-Collection of Short Stories'* (2018); and *Nga yi kher rkyang dang khyed kyi rtsom rig - 'Bol rtsom phyogs bsgrigs 'My Loneliness and Your Literature - Prose Collection'* (2018), which features sixteen articles.

Lha byams rgyal has been recognized multiple times, including being awarded the *Sbrang char* Literature Award four times (2003, 2008, 2010, 2014). *Beloved Tibetan Children*, the author's first long novel, was first serialized in *Sbrang char* in 2011² and published as a book by the Nationalities Press in Beijing in 2012.³

The author has discussed his writings, how they reach readers, and his purpose in writing using Tibetan. For example, after the release of his most recent two books in 2018, he made the following remarks in an interview on the Tibetan Section of CNR (China National Radio):

Most of the short stories in this new collection [*The Sleeping Stream*] were not previously published. The Internet reaches more readers much faster

¹ One short story in this collection - *Mi la tsi tsi* (2010:106-123) - is inserted, with slight changes, as chapters 25-27 of the novel *Beloved Tibetan Children* (Lha byams rgyal 2012:132-146).

² "For nearly thirty years *Drangchar* ("A Light Rain") has been one of the premier Tibetan literary journals. Established in 1981, it was one of the first journals devoted to literature written in the Tibetan language. Over the years it has become an essential Tibetan language literary resource featuring influential Tibetan writers and poets, literary theory pieces, and artwork, and has inspired countless literary and artistic endeavors" (<https://bit.ly/33FD7YJ>, accessed 18 August 2019).

³ The novel was republished by the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives in (2014) and Tibet People's Press (2015); and translated into Japanese and published in Japan (2014). Lists of Lha byams rgyal's works, translations, and commentaries on his short stories are available in Pad ma phag mo rta mgrin (2018:59-66). A brief account of the writer's life, including information on literature awards he received and the translation of his first long novel, is given in Robin's endnote (Lhabyamgyal and Robin 2016:183).

than paper journals. The articles I put on websites are mostly short essays and prose, representing my reflections on culture. After writing dozens of Internet articles, I collected them in this book of prose [*My Loneliness and Your Literature*].

My short story, *Sunlight on the Road* [2010:1-34], is about life in Lha sa. As an A mdo writer, I try to use Lha sa dialect in this story to make it more realistic. As we [A mdo, Dbus gtsang, and Khams] share the same overall culture, it makes my writing in Lha sa dialect relatively easy. In my newly published book [*The Sleeping Stream*], I use the same characters featured in the previously published short story *Sunlight on the Road*, trying to record their changes after five or ten years. I also hope to write a third novel to continue writing about Dbus gtsang life. My novella, *Nga ni yar 'brog g.yu mtsho nang gi nyazhig yin 'I am a Fish in Yar 'brog Lake'* [2016:1-126], presents Dbus gtsang life with characters from Dbus gtsang, Khams, and A mdo. I try to write about such cross-regional life. Tibetans, no matter from Dbus gtsang, Kham, or A mdo, share the same background and traditions. As communication and travel between these regions become more frequent, writing about such mingled lives seems more true-to-life. I hope to write stories equally appreciated by readers from Dbus gtsang, Kham, and A mdo.

Literature functions to preserve a language, which is why I keep writing in Tibetan. Opportunities for Tibetan academic researchers to use their native language are dimming, and I notice that some of my colleagues, who majored in the Tibetan language at university, have not used their native language in writing for years. In this environment, I find it particularly important to write in my native language (CNR:2018).¹

In the same interview, the author comments on *Beloved Tibetan Children*:

Some people ask me if this is my autobiography. I say it is not. I thought about writing it for a long time. What does it tell? One person's life span is short, probably sixty or eighty years, but the wheel of history never stops

¹ All quotes from non-English sources are my translations, which I have condensed and edited for clarity.

as centuries pass by. What are we left with? The thirty or forty years of the 1980s, 1990s, 2000s, and 2010s have seen drastic changes in Tibetan regions. Such rapid change is rare in the entire history of Tibet. While it may not be appreciated now, readers will understand after one or two centuries, how we developed and changed directly from a society with little in the way of scientific technology, modern life, and modern information, to a society with these agencies. As I wrote in this novel, I remember my family owning a small radio, and later we bought a black-and-white TV set. Afterward, we gradually accessed more modern devices. Our society had no modern elements at all before that time. Amid such drastic changes in the larger society, what happens to individuals? Their experience growing up forms and changes their thoughts and cultural opinions – I wrote it with such thoughts. However, this is my first novel and may not be that successful. In my early life, I grew up in a small village in a rural area. Afterward, I have lived in this giant modern metropolis [Beijing]. My son is different. He started his life in this modern city. Given such a big difference between us, I wrote my opinions in the "Epilogue," describing my concerns about the environment where my son is growing up. Whether right or wrong, my life experience created my opinions. Anyway, I have this true feeling that earlier years with a simple life were joyful. Children were close to nature, and the nature of life belonged to oneself, but now it is completely different. I wrote this novel with such feelings (CNR:2018).

In another interview, the author has more to say about his first novel:

In terms of *Beloved Tibetan Children*, after hundreds or even thousands of years, its historical value will exceed its literary value because the social changes in Tibetan areas from the 1980s to the early twenty-first century are extraordinary and such a great leap forward in development is rare in all of human history. There is a huge difference between existence and nonexistence, and everything has been affected by these earth-shaking changes. When I was a child, my family did not have a television nor a sewing machine, but we had a radio. I described this in the first part of the novel, and only in the second part did I write about devices representing

modernity. Therefore, when I say its historical value, I tried to write how changes in material life influenced Tibetans' inner ideological culture. Writings on such changes are rare in Tibetan literature. While such changes can be presented more accurately through documentary films or reports, few are working on such. If history is left alone without such records, fewer and fewer people will know such changes ever occurred. My son, Bstan 'dzin 'brug grags, will not understand there was such a period in his father's private life and how changes in Tibetan society were tightly connected. His generation will not have such life experiences. In this sense, the importance of this novel is that with great patience, I attempt to reflect on one generation of Tibetans represented by four children with different life paths, the changes in their lives, and the influences of such changes on their fates, personalities, and lives. This should be a value of this novel, if it has any. I wrote this novel with such intentions (2018b:222-224).

THE STORY

This novel depicts the lives and changes experienced by ordinary people from Mar nang grong,¹ a rural Tibetan village, from the late twentieth to the early twenty-first centuries.² The story is told in the first person 'I' who remains unnamed. Other protagonists include Gsal sgron, Nyi ma don grub, and Thar 'phel.

The story begins with these children's lives during preschool. They play together, occasionally fight among themselves, listen to Ge sar epics and *mi la tsi tsi*³ stories told by Gsal sgron's grandfather, play house, and later attend the newly constructed village school together.

Changes occur inevitably. Children are eager to grow up and explore the outside world, wondering what lies at the end of the village

¹ Mar nang grong is a fictional place in A mdo and appears in other of the writer's works.

² I noticed a change in describing the time of the story in the first sentence of the novel. The *Sbrang char* version gives: "It is the winter of 1980 AD according to the human calendar" (Lha byams rgyal, 2011:5); and the 2012 book version gives "It is a snowy winter morning" (Lha byams rgyal, 2012:1).

³ According to Tibetan folklore, it is a spirit that harms children.

path leading outside the valley. Nyi ma don grub is chosen as the reincarnate *bla ma* of the village and taken to the village monastery. He becomes the religious leader of the community overnight. Thar 'phel's family also plans to send him to the monastery to become a monk but cancels this plan after the tragic drowning of his younger brother. Now the only son, Thar 'phel, has to take on the responsibilities of an adult man in the family, i.e., herding animals, marrying, and continuing the family line.

Meanwhile, Gsal sgron's grandfather and the narrator's father arrange two marriages. The narrator's elder sister, 'Brug skyid, is engaged to marry Gsal sgron's elder brother, 'Brug byams, and expected to live in her husband's home. In exchange, Gsal sgron is to marry the narrator and move to the latter's home. 'Brug skyid secretly dates Mi 'gyur, the new teacher at the village school. She protests the engagement and elopes with her lover, but all in vain, given the unshakable authority her father holds in this male-dominated society.

On the other hand, the engagement between Gsal sgron and the narrator seems to have been accepted by both parties. The young "couple" plays house together and get along well:

I said to Gsal sgron, "As you are my wife, please give me a piece of candy."

"Your family has a radio and bicycle, so I would like to become your wife," Gsal sgron responded (Lha byams rgyal 2012:169-170).

Time passes, and the narrator is thirteen years old. The teacher, Mi 'gyur, leaves the village to pursue a university degree. Nyi ma don grub, the reincarnate village *bla ma*, leaves for Sku 'bum Monastery to study Buddhism. In the village school, boys greatly outnumber girls who are kept at home to help farm and herd. Most boy classmates are sent to the village monastery by their parents to be monks. For these reasons, Gsal sgron, Thar 'phel, and the narrator are the only students in the first class of the village primary school to graduate. The local government and the village committee hold a special ceremony to mark this historic achievement.

The three children take middle school entrance exams. Gsal sgron and the narrator pass the exams and become the first villagers to enroll in the middle school at the county seat. Thar 'phel, depicted as a not-so-smart boy, fails the exams and herds for his family. The results are somehow within their expectations. The narrator's father sends his son and Gsal sgron to the county town in a cart pulled by their mule. It is the children's first time to leave the village. Part One concludes with: "When I look back, the valley, which I used to believe to be huge when we were in it, now looks so small when I gaze back from the top of the mountain pass" (Lha byams rgyal 2012:217).

Part Two begins more than twenty years after the narrator and Gsal sgron had left the village to attend middle school in the county seat, with the narrator now working in Beijing. While the narrator is in his office with nothing to do, waiting for snow to fall, he receives an unexpected phone call from Thar 'phel, now the village leader, asking him to write a formal grievance involving a pastureland dispute with neighboring Yar nang grong Village.

This prompts the narrator to recall the past. Seven years earlier, his father, the old village leader, died from cancer in great sorrow because he was unable to see his son. This was followed by the shocking news of Nyi ma don grub disappearing from the monastery. Devoted villagers sent men to search for him but to no avail.

Nyi ma don grub is the source of information for most of these past events, which he relates to the narrator when they meet in a five-star hotel many years after they last saw each other, at a time when the former was still the village reincarnate *bla ma*.

One early morning in the same year the narrator's father died, Nyi ma don grub left a note in his chamber and secretly left the monastery. After many difficulties, he reached 'Bras spungs Monastery in Lha sa, but was rejected because he lacked an ID card. He stayed in a hotel near the Potala Palace. Running low on money, and considering his monk's status an obstacle to earning a living, he removed his monk's robe for the first time and went outside. The hotel owner noticed his layman's clothing and asked, "Are you sure you want to step into worldly mud?" ["break your monk's vows and begin a lay life"].

That night, after Nyi ma don grub guiltily moved to another small hotel, a hotel attendant knocked on the door bringing hot water. After chatting this "hotel attendant" tried to seduce him. Unable to resist, Nyi ma don grub gave her one hundred RMB and broke his monk vows.

Through conversation with the young woman, he learned that she knew Gsal sgron. "Is she doing the same business?" Nyi ma don grub asked.

"Don't worry. My friend, Gsal sgron, wouldn't do such things," reassured the woman.

When he woke up the next morning, the visitor had gone, leaving a pile of cash next to the bed. When he asked the hotel owner, he learned that there was no such hotel attendant.

Nyi ma don grub opened a butter shop with the cash and learned a year later that the "hotel attendant" was Gsal sgron, who he then searched for unsuccessfully in bars.

The results of university entrance exams decide the future. The narrator enrolled in a university in the city while Gsal sgron, having failed the exam, ran away from home, finally ending up in Lha sa and later meeting Nyi ma don grub coincidentally in the hotel room. The different fates of the long-engaged pair have determined the impossibility of their ever becoming a couple.

One day, Nyi ma don grub recognized Gsal sgron when she came to buy butter. The two old acquaintances had a lot of catching up to do. In chatting about the past, Nyi ma don grub described how he broke his monk's vows. While both were aware of their hotel encounter, Gsal sgron denied being the mystery hotel attendant, avoiding further embarrassment.

Later, Nyi ma don grub went to Zi ling (Xining), a city not far from his home village on some antique business. Lacking the courage to visit his home, he dispatched his assistant to Mar nang grong to inform his devotees about his situation and look for antiques. The monks and villagers were excited to learn their respected *bla ma* was well after many years of disappearance.

The first antique the assistant purchased was a nine-eyed *gzi* bead¹ from the narrator's home. The narrator's father was ill, and the family badly needed cash, so they sold this family treasure for a mere fifty RMB. Later, Nyi ma don grub sold it for 500,000 RMB to a merchant.

Nyi ma don grub and his assistant also secretly visited the village and stole the bell in the school he once attended. The villagers and teachers were unaware of the value of the antique bell. Nyi ma don grub became wealthy through such unscrupulous activities.

After eight bitter years in Lha sa, Gsal sgron opened a bar in the city. Nyi ma don grub was a regular visitor. One night, after drinking together, a tipsy Gsal sgron leaned her head against his shoulder, sobbing:

Her feelings of warmth and coldness in a foreign land during the last eight years, her regrets and yearnings, her sorrows, her dreams, and all her dreams of love, all turned to tears, soaking Nyi ma don grub's shoulder (Lha byams rgyal 2012:326).

Meanwhile, the narrator, who was from the same village but now lived in Lha sa, experienced similar homesickness. He frequently quarreled with his wife, an ethnic Tibetan who grew up in the city, does not speak Tibetan, had no interest in the countryside, and had a materialistic worldview very different from the narrator's. This unhappiness made him weary, and he yearned for the countryside.

The dispute over pastureland between Mar nang grong and the neighboring village worsened and led to deadly conflict, with one death on each side.

The narrator phones Nyi ma don grub in Lha sa about the tragedy. Both have been thinking about doing something for their community and discuss returning home. The narrator asks Nyi ma don grub to encourage Gsal sgron also to come. After the phone call, the

¹ *Gzi* refers to etched agate beads with "eyes." For more, see Ebbinghouse and Winsten (1988).

narrator immediately purchases a plane ticket and takes a taxi to the airport.

The story ends.

STUDIES OF LHA BYAMS RGYAL'S WRITINGS

A growing corpus of studies¹ reflects Lha byams rgyal's popularity among readers. Based on the writer's earlier short stories, Bdud lha rgyal (2005), a dedicated reviewer of Tibetan language literature, praises the writer's skills in structure, atmosphere, and language.

Rin chen bkra shis' 2015 paper is the only formally published paper I have accessed dealing exclusively with *Beloved Tibetan Children*. While in general, commenting positively on the novel's structure, style, and language, he suggests that the author has not put much effort into character creation.

Pad ma phag mo rta mgrin's (2018) MA thesis focuses on Lha byams rgyal's literature. Applying various academic theories, its eight chapters provide information about the writer and attempt to analyze the writer's literature thoroughly. While the author's general comments are positive, he criticizes the limited use of literary language, character creation, the inadequate use of storytelling plots, and abrupt endings. Numerous quotations from literary theories and examples from Lha byams rgyal's writings attempt to substantiate these claims. Certain of his theoretical arguments are unconvincing; for instance, the author quotes several short phrases from the writer's works which he labels "grammatically loose and artistically empty" and explains this by lack of fluency in the literary language (49-50). As an example of abrupt endings, he writes:

At the end of *Lovely Tibetan Children*, as the writer [the narrator] participates in the story and leaves for home to demonstrate his attachment to his ethnicity, the vividness of the novel's characters in the

¹ See Pad ma phag mo rta mgrin (2018:64-66) for essays on Lha byams rgyal's writings.

novel are crippled and the possibility for extension of the atmosphere is impeded (53).

Chos skyong (2018), a long-term editor of *Sbrang char* and a close acquaintance of the writer, has positive views on the writer's overall skills, particularly in creating atmospheres, use of poetic language, and description of nature settings:

Lha byams rgyal's novels have unique characteristics, including his skill to create atmosphere. ... For instance, in *Beloved Tibetan Children*, when describing time, he uses intersecting periods, e.g., "several years later" or "several years before," to create circular story timelines that are all linked. In terms of substance, he repeatedly describes invisible things such as wind and sunlight that make the storylines adjustable in length or function as a pause¹ or to create poetic beauty. ... Secondly, his stories go beyond the current ordinary social phenomena and present two opposites such as the overt and hidden, noise and silence, and native place and the city, to explore a new inner world that has been and is being forgotten. He expresses anguish through mental contradictions such as yearning to grow up and hesitation to grow up, eagerness to return to the native place, but the impossibility of doing so, a willingness to be integrated into the city, but how this is impossible (55-58).

Most of Lha byams rgyal's stories feature two opposing locations – a rural home and the city, with an escape from home, helplessness in the new location, and returning home... Returning and yearning to return are implied throughout his writings (341).

However, Chos skyong gives the following "teasing" comments, demonstrating the reviewer's insightful reading of the author's works:

After Nyi ma don grub, Gsal sgron, and the narrator leave their native home, the vividness, attractiveness, and facticity featured in Part One are missing in Part Two. I teased the writer during chats by saying, "You seem

¹ In other words, the story can be complete without such descriptions of nature, but such writings add length and give readers a break from the flow of events.

to be deeply trapped in childhood and your native home place and never able to enter adulthood and the outside world." This is probably true. All his successful novels write about childhood life and the feelings of youth (344).

Rinchenkhar (2017) provides a detailed summary of the story, positive comments on the autobiographic writing style, and use of language (i.e., use of Dbus gtsang dialect by an A mdo writer). He comments on how the story resonates with his own life, "its descriptions of life and emotions closely resemble many aspects of my childhood" and "This is testimony to the authenticity the writer captured in his fiction" (83).

Françoise Robin translated Lha byams rgyal's short story *Blung la bcod pa 'Entrusted to the Wind'* (Lha byams rgyal 2010:35-54) to English (Lhabyamgyal 2016:178-183) and briefly introduces the author and his literary works in an endnote. Robin further analyses this short story in a separate article in the same journal (Robin 2016:116-127).

Virtanen discusses "modern Tibetan literature," using two Tibetan novels published in the 1990s that feature ordinary people's daily lives in Tibetan areas.¹ She discusses the characters of these two novels, applying James Phelan's theory of characters in terms of synthetic, mimetic, and thematic components. *Beloved Tibetan Children* is obviously within the category of "ordinary people's lives," yet only the name of its author appears in an article footnote.

¹ The two novels are Bkra shis dpal ldan's (b. 1962) *Phal pa'i khyim tshang gi skyid sdug 'The Life of an Ordinary Family'* (1992) and Stag 'bum rgyal's (b. 1966) *Lhing 'jags kyi rtswa thang 'The Silent Grassland'* (1999).

DISCUSSION

HOME

Lha byams rgyal's focus on natal home and childhood memories in an autobiographical style is a recurring theme. A series of anecdotes create a panoramic image of social and historical issues, e.g., childhood and education, monasteries and reincarnate *bla ma*, herding and farming livelihoods, pastureland disputes and resolutions, arranged marriage and women's fates, and more, presenting multiple perspectives.

Beloved Tibetan Children begins in the 1980s, a historical turning point for China as the government launched policies of "reform and opening up" after years of internal turmoil. Since that time, the entire nation has experienced unprecedented economic and social transformations. Mar nang grong, a rural Tibetan village in a remote mountain region, is enveloped in a whirlwind of dramatic social and economic changes.

Fundamental and universal changes affecting individuals, households, and the entire community are inevitable. A government-supported primary school is built in the village to provide children a modern education; the community monastery is reconstructed after a policy allowing expression of religious belief is implemented;¹ and private business is permitted (the narrator's father engages in lucrative livestock dealing).

These seemingly positive changes shake old traditions, creating such new challenges in the community as increased financial burdens on households because of religious expenses; a decreasing number of school children as more boys become monks in the monastery; and the new school teacher, who criticizes the practice of sending boys to the

¹ The Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) catastrophically impacted all aspects of life in China, including religion. In an attempt at correction, government at all levels strove to revive and implement freedom of religious belief, redressed unjust judgments imposed on religious personages, and reopened sites for religious activities (<https://bit.ly/323umGx>, accessed 7 September 2019).

monastery instead of keeping them in school, and is consequently seen by old villagers as an anti-religious foe. The narrator's father buys the first TV set in the village, and the narrator and his sisters ask villagers to pay who come to watch it. Not ready to accept such "capitalist" behavior, TV audience numbers dramatically drop.

A deadly disaster due to new changes is approaching. A pasture between Mar nang grong and its neighboring village, Yar nang grong, has no clear ownership. Children from both villages herd livestock on the land and enjoy various competitions. When the government later requires communities to divide pastureland among individual households and encourages fencing individual pastures,¹ Yar nang grong, a herding community, begins fencing the pastureland between the two villages. Mar nang grong considers this a provocation and petitions the local government to stop the fencing but receives no meaningful arbitration, which leads to conflict between the two communities.

Changes are emphasized through individual fates and futures, using the four protagonists, who witness and experience these historical changes. The children play, attend the village school, and grow up together. They are eager to grow up fast and dream about their future and the outside world. They might have had similar futures if it had been during the "old order" of their grandparents' or parents' time. However, it is a time of critical change with the introduction of new technologies such as radios, sewing machines, bicycles, televisions, and, more importantly, a state-supported school. This dramatically impacts the inhabitants of a closed society like Mar nang grong, particularly the younger generation, represented here by the four protagonists.

Other characters add color and new perspectives to the storyline. Gsal sgron's grandfather, Spo bo ral pa can 'Braided

¹ This extension of a policy allocating land to individual households was introduced in agricultural communities in the early 1980s. Rural reform, with output quotas fixed by household as a basic principle, initiated China's campaign of internal reform (<https://on.china.cn/2P9tsB5>, accessed 5 September 2019).

Grandpa',¹ an elder with religious authority in the village who is also a fortune teller, spins folktales and Ge sar epics to an appreciative audience at the village crossroads during leisure time. He is depicted as a defender of the old traditions. The narrator's father, the village leader, is a capable, open-minded man who uses the policy of "opening up" to make a fortune for the household by buying and selling livestock. He is the first villager to buy a radio, a bicycle, a sewing machine, and a television. With his effort and proposals to the local government, the village builds a new school and receives a young teacher. Later, the narrator's father supports the narrator in attending high school and university.

However, the limit of this open-mindedness is vividly presented through his own daughter's (the narrator's sister) tragic marriage that he and Spo bo ral pa can arrange. The narrator's sister's futile struggle and her mother's silent sympathy reveal the fate of women who are firmly controlled by others in this male-dominated society. The young teacher assigned to the village school, representing an educated slice of society, strives to awaken a new generation. As an increasing number of his boy students are sent to the monastery by their parents, competition between traditional monastic education and modern school education emerges.

The narrator's constant conflicts with his wife, who grew up in the city, and neither speaks Tibetan nor is interested in learning or respecting the culture or the environment in which the narrator grew up, vividly illustrate two contradictory Tibetan identities. Physically far from the terrestrial environment and ethnic culture that nurtured his values, the narrator's concern for the loss of identity extends to his son, who is growing up in the city. The extreme differences between the couple's values and worldviews create tragedy. The root of this misfortune is the narrator's dual identities. He attempts to integrate

¹ *Spo bo* 'grandfather'; *ral pa can* 'one with long braided hair'; a man with long hair on top of or around his head characterizes Snying ma sect practitioners. *Ral pa can* is also the name of the forty-first king of the Tibet Kingdom (Eighth Century).

into the life of the city where he physically dwells, which is at odds with the irresistible pull of his natal home.

Longing for home is a recurring agony for the writer. He not only writes of such torment in the story *Lo de la 'That Year'* (2016:127-219) but also in articles such as *Phyir log mi thub ba'i mi 'the Man Who Cannot Return'* (2018c). In the latter, he writes, "Those living outside [their natal home] surely wish that the lovely native home that exists in the heart would remain the same as it was when they left it." He adds, "Those who are away from their native homes may have a suppressed dream of returning. But the home that repeatedly appears in such dreams is a distant destination that is unattainable. This is a tragedy exiles face" (Lha byams rgyal 2018c).

CHARACTERIZATION

Rather than direct description, Lha byams rgyal skillfully uses events, dialogues, and nicknames to create vibrant characters, represent a changing world and values, and reflect a feature of emerging class divisions. For instance, the arrogance of the government worker, Secretary Wang, who visits the community to discuss the construction of the school, is depicted through smoking. Three different smoking styles are described: Spo bo ral pa can puffs his bronze-decorated pipe, the narrator's father carefully rolls tobacco in a strip of newspaper before smoking it. After this foreshadowing, we read: "Secretary Wang smokes a cigarette differently than the others. He took a cigarette from a small box, lit it with a match, and gently blew out the flame" (17).

Mi rkyang gcod pa 'Single Man Gcod pa', is poor and often mocked by villagers. When the village chooses the ruins of the previous village headman's home for the new school site, Gcod pa, who claims to be a descendant of the headman, reacts with outrage:

... When villagers of Mar nang grong gathered with pickaxes, shovels, and baskets at the ruins located in the upper location of the village that day, Mi rkyang gcod pa suddenly became furious and ran crazily among the people while arbitrarily cursing, with a face turning crimson.

"A *ha bo!*¹ A *ha bo!* When bullies have no limits, they urinate on the heads of the weak. A *ha bo!* Do you guys in this pathetic group have the slightest right to bully my Mar nang headman's lineage? A *ha bo!* When my ancestors are gone, resembling eagles that have taken flight, you'll start dirty deeds to destroy the nest of a little bird. I, the proletarian Gcod pa..." With his hands clasped behind his back, Mi rkyang gcod pa walked back and forth among the villagers, his buttocks visible now and again through the holes in his old pants (22-23).

In this unhappy exchange, the values and worldviews of the narrator's wife are presented as at odds with his:

Bstan 'dzin sgron me told me, "Why don't you change your personality?"

"How do I change it?" I asked.

"Why don't you do things wisely and act following others? If you're always stubborn, how could my father, no matter how capable, help promote you to a leadership position?"

"Position, position! Is that all you think about?"

"Others wish to have the background you have now. What a pity you have no desire to move forward! Is there anyone who does not want to have a position nowadays?" Bstan 'dzin sgron me said to me angrily while repeatedly changing TV channels (273-274).

Lha byams rgyal's fiction deals with Lha sa, bars, the city, Mar nang grong, characters leaving a rural home and attempting to assimilate into urban life, and the dilemma of yearning to return home and the impossibility of doing so.

These themes can be found in similar characters and scenes in the author's other works. *Kha bar sgug pa* 'Waiting for Snow' and *Grib gzigs khrod kyi mi tshe* 'Life in the Shadow' collected in the writer's first short story collection *Lam gyi nyi 'od* 'Sunlight on the Road' (2010), *Nya ni yar 'brog g.yu mtsho nang gi nya zhig yin* 'I'm a Fish

¹ An expression of desperation and hopelessness comparable to "Oh my god!"

in Yar'brog Lake', and *Lo de la* 'That Year' collected in *Collection of Lha byams rgyal's Medium-length Novels* feature the theme of young adult Tibetans leaving their rural homes for a life in an alien environment, which in most cases is Beijing, where the writer currently works.

These stories' protagonists are similar. For instance, Gsal sgron in *Beloved Tibetan Children* is an archetype of Gsal sgron in "I'm a Fish in Yar 'brog Lake," Gsal sgron in *Rma 'gram gyi ljon pa kher skyes* 'A Single Tree on the Riverbank' (Lha byams rgyal 2018a:143-189), Me tog pad ma in "Waiting for Snow," and Bkra shis and Chos sgron in "Life in the Shadow" are found in *Beloved Tibetan Children*, i.e., the narrator and his wife Stan 'dzin sgron me. A slight difference is:

"Now our young man, Bkra shis, has made good progress," his boss said. The stubborn 'I' who resists power and position in *Beloved Tibetan Children* eventually makes 'good progress' here. He learns to flatter his superiors! (Lha byams rgyal 2010:102).

LOVE, SEX, AND GENDER

Readers are interested in love and sex scenes beneath which lurk suffering, sacrifice, submission, rebellion, resignation, supplication, domination, and more. Lha byams rgyal's short stories and the novel under discussion, contain similar love plots, sex scenes, and comparable fates of female characters originally from the countryside but who have migrated to cities to fulfill their dreams. In most cases, female characters have sex with men to get what they want, either material or influence. Most of these women then experience tragedy.

In *Beloved Tibetan Children*, the sexual encounter between Gsal sgron and Nyi ma don grub occurs in a hotel room. In *Sunlight on the Road*, Lha mdzes, a countryside woman who does hourly work in Lha sa, loses her virginity to a bar boss after he gets her drunk. In *Sgrol ma'i rmi lam* 'Sgrol ma's Dreams' (2010:124-147), the protagonist, Sgrol ma, is in love with and dates a village man. After her mother dies, her stepfather surreptitiously adds drugs to her tea after dinner and

has sex with her, which her boyfriend witnesses one night. When pregnant, she commits suicide after discovering the shameful truth.

In *I am a Fish in Yar 'brog Lake*, Dpal lha, another young woman from the countryside, migrates to Beijing. She loves Sum pa, but his love is not reciprocated. After drinking too much, she has sex with Rnam grol, who is both her and Sum pa's friend. Later, she discovers that the nine-eyed *gzi* bead on a thread around her neck - a family treasure - has mysteriously become a fake one. Someone close to her must have replaced it without her knowledge. Wandering the streets in despair, she is struck by a car and killed.

In *That Year*, Gsal sgron becomes pregnant. Her lover then goes abroad and never returns. Humiliated by relatives and fellow villagers, she suffers terribly as a single mother until her son is identified as the reincarnation of a deceased *bla ma* in the community.

Beloved Tibetan Children and *That Year* feature similar sex scenes: sexual encounters between the protagonist Gsal sgron and her boyfriend (*That Year*) and Zla sgron and her future husband (*Beloved Tibetan Children*), both take place in open fields during the daytime and are observed from a distance through binoculars by men who have feelings for the women.

Lha byams rgyal discusses sex scenes in his novels during an interview:

Historically, Tibetans have had many taboos. Therefore, although there undoubtedly have been various oblique sexual affairs, people pretend as though they never happened, and there is little written about it. For instance, mentioning *la gzhas* and *brtse glu*¹ with undisguised salacious words in the presence of parents or siblings is taboo. It is different for Han Chinese and foreigners. A writer who grew up in a very conservative ethnic group must have cultural and psychological constraints and thus may try to avoid writing such direct erotic words. I tapped this topic a little bit in my writings as an experiment, as I think it is important to have elements of creativity and development in our literature. Tibetan novels cannot have

¹ *La gzhas* and *brtse glu* are synonyms for "love song." For more, see Kelsang Norbu (2015).

automatic development if we are too vigilant on cultural and psychological restrictions, which may undermine our capabilities. Therefore, we must attempt many trials. It turned out that such new experiments attract readers as we push little by little. Meanwhile, writing such content is sometimes also necessary for the plot (Lha byams rgyal 2018b:156-157).

FEMALE CHARACTERS

I now examine the author's female characters, using Gsal sgron (one of the four protagonists of *Beloved Tibetan Children*) and the narrator's wife, Bstan 'dzin sgron me, as examples. Compared to other female characters, such as the narrator's sister, 'Brug skyid, who readily chooses silence or surrender to male domination, Gsal sgron and Bstan 'dzin sgron me are depicted as tough female characters. By "tough," I refer to women exercising independence and agency in their lives, and less submissiveness. For example, the former leaves home for Lha sa to struggle for an independent new life and the latter's assertive interactions with her husband.

Gsal sgron leaves home after she fails the college entrance examination (which the narrator passes) and eventually reaches Lha sa, where hardship forces her into prostitution. Nyi ma don grub is the only person she trusts enough in this city far from her natal home to express her sorrow and sob on his shoulder. This line of events shows Gsal sgron's deep attachment to home, a theme the author emphasizes, but in a way that shows she still serves men.

Furthermore, each of Gsal sgron's childhood mates achieves "success" later in life, i.e., a village leader (Thar 'phel), a businessman (Nyi ma don grub), and a scholar (the narrator) in a city. The men talk about the past and present and make plans for the future. Yet Gsal sgron is not allowed even a slight chance by the author to express herself directly. Instead, Nyi ma don grub talks for her, interpreting her life in Lha sa entirely from a male perspective.

Why is there only one female among the four protagonists, and why do male secondary characters outnumber the female ones? Bstan

'dzin sgron me, the narrator's wife, was raised in a big city. This woman with strong materialistic values is contemptuous of her husband's rural background. To improve her and the family's status, she urges her husband to seek a job promotion with her father's support. She puts all her hope for the future on men - her husband and father. Why does she not strive to change her life? Does Lha byams rgyal's characterization of females reveal a belief in male superiority, or is he simply portraying reality? Analyses based on appropriate/inappropriate gender consciousness are almost absent in critiques of contemporary Tibetan literature.

To further illustrate the absence of gender consciousness in literary critiques, I examine Tshe ring rdo rje's (2014) review of a short story by Stag 'bum rgyal (2008). It is one of the very few reviews I have accessed that discusses the fate and characteristics of female characters. The reviewer reluctantly categorizes the protagonist, Sgrol ma skyid, "as a positive character," but criticizes her for visiting a male teacher to have an affair "like a stray dog" on the ground that such a plot is aberrant in pastoral Tibetan areas (93). He contends that men visiting women (dating) is standard social behavior in such locales, while women visiting men is unthinkable. He emphasizes that he has found "no other justification" for the novelist to write such an impossible scene other than the traditional antipathy between herders and farmers. He asserts that such a scene is "against true life" and is merely a literary depiction of reality. The reviewer does not see or refuses to see, the relentless struggle of a Tibetan woman confronting tradition and attempting to alter her fate.

The novel's open ending presents readers' space for imagining further development; however, the novel's abrupt conclusion has disappointed certain readers. Among the reviews I cited earlier, Chos skyong and Pad ma phag mo rta mgrin describe the ending as a shortcoming. As if realizing the abrupt ending, the author clarifies the theme in the "Epilogue":

Even today, I neither understand the special force that propels us to run forward with all our effort, nor do I comprehend for what purpose we run forward so earnestly (368).

The easygoing life described in detail and childhood mentalities presented in the novel's first part are treasures we are losing, and the haste, sense of loss, and helplessness of adult children (in the second part) resemble the contemporary epidemic diseases spreading among us.

I must also mention the idea of a native home. Nowadays, people are losing their native homes. My lovely son will neither have the concept of "native home," nor will he have it as a destination to return to. The reason is that my son was born in and will grow up in the city. A native home is not simply a geographic space; rather, it is the point from which we set off and, more importantly, a destination to which we can return (369).

CONCLUSION

This narrative is a genre of contemporary Tibetan novels characterizing the deleterious effects of the relentless march of modernization on traditional Tibetan culture, including family structures. The author raises questions of great magnitude: Are there any "successful" characters in this novel, ones that have managed to bridge the old and the new while retaining fundamental Tibetan values and carrying them forward into the brave new world? And if there are none, why? Will it always be the case that at least one generation must bridge tumultuous changes and, in doing so, be the victims - neither happy in the new and unable to return to the "old" that has already changed? Will their children be the beneficiaries?

In dealing with such issues, the author uses his literary talent to draw skillfully and thoughtfully upon his personal experiences in rural Tibetan areas to create a powerful narrative. The shattering of traditional rural life within the timeframe Lha byams rgyal specifies, ushers in historically significant social changes. This fundamental social alteration inevitably brings loss to and transformation in

cultural identity. The pain it engenders is expressed in the "Epilogue" that has resonated with many readers and generated considerable academic commentary.

The children featured in the novel, their experiences while growing up, and their different fates in life – chosen or not – are enmeshed in a visible, physical world of monumental tumultuous alterations. The individual characters' happiness and sorrow, ease and anxiety, desire and helplessness, faith and betrayal, and control and rebellion, which formulate the fabric of an invisible inner world, are skillfully particularized in the novel. At the time in which the novel begins, it had not been possible to imagine the impact of the acquisition of material wealth and an emerging class system based on educational attainment on individuals and an entire ethnicity. As a well-educated Tibetan elite, the author's agony over the loss of identity is immense. And as he makes clear, the value of this historical record exceeds all the novel's other values.

REFERENCES

- Bdud lha rgyal འབྲུག་ལྗོངས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ། 2005. *Deng gi gsar skyes rtsom pa po gnyis kyi sgrung gtam las 'phros pa'i gleng slong* དེང་གི་གསལ་རྒྱུས་རྩོམ་པ་པོ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་སྐྱེས་གཏམ་ལས་འཕྲོས་པའི་གླེང་སྟོང་། [Questions Based on Two Contemporary New Writers' Novels]. *Sbrang char* སྤང་ཆར། [Light Rain] 4:116-123.
- Bkra shis dpal ldan བཀ་ཤིས་དཔལ་ལྷན།. 1992. *Phal pa'i khyim tshang gi skyid sdug* ཕལ་པའི་ཁྱིམ་ཚང་གི་སྦྱིད་སྤྱད། [The Life of an Ordinary Family]. Lha sa ལྷ་ས། [Lasa 拉萨]: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang བོད་སྐད་སྐད་མི་དམངས་དཔེ་སྐྱུང་ཁང་། [Tibet People's Publishing House].
- China.org.cn. 2018. Household Contract Responsibility System (Reform and Opening Up).

<https://on.china.cn/2P9tsB5>, accessed 5 September 2019

Chos skyong ཚོས་སྤྱོད། 2018. *Zing long rde'u 'grem-sbrang char 2000-2010 gzhir bzhags te dus rabs gsar ba'i bod kyi rtsom rig gtam du gleng ba ཟིང་ལོང་རྟེན་ལུ་འགྲེམ་སྤྱད་ཆར་ཨ་ཡོ་ཡོ་ཡོ་གཞིར་བཞག་ཏུ་རྟེན་ལུ་རབས་གསར་བའི་པོད་ཀྱི་ཚུམ་རིག་གཏམ་དུ་གླེང་བ།* [A Study of Contemporary Tibetan Literature Based on 2000-2010 Sbrang char Magazine]. Zi ling ཟེ་ལིང་། [Xining 西宁]: Mtsho snon mi rigs dpe skrun khang མཚོ་སྤྱོད་མི་རིགས་དཔེ་སླུམ་ཁང་། [Qinghai Nationalities Press].

CNR [China National Radio]. 2018. *Rtsom pa po Lha byams rgyal dang khong gi gsar rtsom gyi lam bu རྩོམ་པ་པོ་ལྷ་བྱམས་རྒྱལ་དང་ཁོང་གི་གསར་ཚུམ་གྱི་ལམ་བུ།* [Lha byams rgyal and his Creative Writing Career].

<https://bit.ly/2ZHEluq>, accessed 20 April 2019

Ebbinghouse, David and Michael Winsten. 1988. Tibetan dZi (gZi) Beads. *The Tibet Journal* 13(1):38-56.

<https://bit.ly/2KZq7Vw>, accessed 19 August 2019

Lha byams rgyal ལྷ་བྱམས་རྒྱལ། 2010. *Lam gyi nyi 'od ལམ་གྱི་ཉི་འོད།* [Sunlight on the Road]. Zi ling ཟེ་ལིང་། [Xining 西宁]: Mtsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang མཚོ་སྤྱོད་མི་རིགས་དཔེ་སླུམ་ཁང་། [Qinghai Nationalities Press].

_____. 2011. *Bod kyi gces phrug པོད་ཀྱི་གཅེས་ཕུག་[Beloved Tibetan Children]. Sbrang char སྤྱང་ཆར།* [Light Rain] 2:4-37.

_____. 2012. *Bod kyi gces phrug པོད་ཀྱི་གཅེས་ཕུག་[Beloved Tibetan Children]. Pe cing བོ་ཅིང་།* [Beijing 北京]: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang མི་རིགས་དཔེ་སླུམ་ཁང་། [Minzu chubanshe] 民族出版社[Nationalities Press].

_____. 2016. *Lha byams rgyal gyi sgrung 'bring phyogs bsgrigs ལྷ་བྱམས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་སྤྱང་འབྲིང་ཕྱགས་བསྡེགས།* [Collection of Lha byams rgyal's

Medium-length Novels]. Zi ling ཟེ་ལིང། [Xining 西宁]: Mtsho snon mi rigs dpe skrun khang མཆོ་སྒྲོན་མི་རིགས་དཔེ་སྐྱུང་ཁང། [Qinghai Nationalities Press].

____. 2018a. *Gnyid du yur ba'i chu-sgrung thung phyogs sgrigs ཀཉིད་དུ་ཡུར་བའི་ཚུ། སྐྱུང་བྱང་ཕྱོགས་བསྐྱིགས།* [The Sleeping Stream-Collection of Short Stories]. Pe cing བེ་ཅིང། [Beijing 北京]: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang གྲུང་གོ་འི་བོད་རིག་པ་དཔེ་སྐྱུང་ཁང། [China's Tibetology Press].

____. 2018b. *Nga yi kher rkyang dang khyed kyi rtsom rig-'Bol rtsom phyogs bsgrigs ང་ཡི་ཁེར་རྒྱལ་དང་ཁྱེད་ཀྱི་རྩོམ་རིག་འབོལ་རྩོམ་ཕྱོགས་བསྐྱིགས།* [My Loneliness and Your Literature-Collection of Prose]. Pe cing བེ་ཅིང། [Beijing 北京]: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang གྲུང་གོ་འི་བོད་རིག་པ་དཔེ་སྐྱུང་ཁང། [China's Tibetology Press].

____. 2018c. *Phyir log mi thub pa'i mi ཕྱིར་ལོག་མི་ཐུབ་པའི་མི།* [The Person Who Cannot Return].

<https://bit.ly/2N6vzKd>, accessed 24 April 2019

Lhashamgyal [Lha byams rgyal] ལྷ་བུ་མས་རྒྱལ། (Françoise Robin, translator). 2016. Entrusted to the Wind. *HIMALAYA* 36(1):178-183.

<https://bit.ly/33zibm6>, accessed 18 August 2019

Pad ma phag mo rta mgrin པད་མ་ཕག་མོ་རྟ་མགྲིན། 2018. *Lha byams rgyal gyi brtsams sgrung zhib 'jug (rab 'byams pa'i mthar phyin dpyad rtsom) ལྷ་བུ་མས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་བར་སྐྱུང་ཞེས་འདུག་(རབ་འབྱམས་པའི་མཐར་ཕྱིན་དཔྱད་རྩོམ)* [Research on Lha byams rgyal's Novels (Master's Thesis)]. Lan kru'u ལན་ཀུ་འུ། [Lanzhou 兰州]: རྒྱུ་བྱང་མི་རིགས་སློབ་གྲྭ་ཆེན་མོ། Nub byang mi rigs slob grwa chen mo [Northwest Nationalities University, Xibei minzhu daxue 西北民族大学].

- Rin chen bkra shis རིན་ཆེན་བཀྲ་ཤིས། 2015. Bod kyi gces phrug ces pa'i sgrung ring cung zad gleng ba བོད་ཀྱི་གཅེས་ཕྱག་ཅེས་པའི་སྤྱད་རིང་ཅུང་ཟད་གླེང་བ། [A Review of the Novel *Beloved Tibetan Children*]. *Bod kyi slob gso* བོད་ཀྱི་སྒྲོ་བ་གསལ། [*Tibetan Education*] 5:46-50.
- Rinchenkhar [Rin chen mkhar རིན་ཆེན་མཁའ་པལ།]. 2017. Review: *Tibet's Beloved Child*. *Asian Highland Perspectives* 45:73-87.
<https://bit.ly/2PotfFT>, accessed 18 August 2019
- Robin, Françoise. 2016. Souls Gone in the Wind? Suspending Belief about Rebirth in Contemporary Artistic Works in the Tibetan World. *Himalaya* 36:1(14).
<https://bit.ly/31MeAzr>, accessed 18 August 2019
- Skal bzang nor bu སྐལ་བཟང་ནོར་བུ། 2015. An Introduction to Amdo Tibetan Love Songs or La Gzhas in Centering the Local. A Festschrift for Dr. Charles Kevin Stuart on the Occasion of his Sixtieth Birthday (G Roche, K Dede, F Pirie, and B Copps, eds). *Asian Highlands Perspectives* 37:1-36.
<https://bit.ly/2Q6ZKRL>, accessed 10 November 2019
- Stag 'bum rgyal ལྷག་འབུམ་རྒྱལ།. 1999. *Lhing 'jags kyi rtswa thang* ལྷིང་འདགས་ཀྱི་རྩ་ཐང་། [*The Silent Grassland*]. Zi ling མེ་ལིང་། [Xining 西宁]: Mtsho snon mi rigs dpe skrun khang མཚོ་སྔན་མི་རིགས་དཔེ་སྐྱུང་ཁང་། [Qinghai Nationalities Press].
- _____. 2008. *Mi rgya bha, khyi rgya bha* མི་རྒྱལ་མཁའ་རྒྱལ། [Man rgya bha, Dog rgyal bha]. *Sbrang char* སྤང་ཆར། [*Light Rain*] 4:16-77.
- Tshe ring rdo rje ཚེ་རིང་རྡོ་རྗེ། 2014. 'Tsho ba'i bden pa dang sgyu rtsal gyi rtog bzo-Stag 'bum rgyal gyi sgrung gtam "mi rgya bha, khyi rgya bha" zhes ba'i nang gi bud med kyi snang brnyan rags tsam gleng ba འཆོ་བའི་བདེན་པ་དང་སྤྱུ་ཅལ་གྱི་ཉོག་བཟོ། ལྷག་འབུམ་རྒྱལ་གྱི་སྤྱད་གཏམ་ 《མི་རྒྱལ་མཁའ་རྒྱལ་། ཞེས་པའི་བདེན་པའི་བྱུང་མེད་ཀྱི་སྤྱད་བརྟན་རགས་ཙམ་གླེང་བ། [Truth of Life and

Fictionalization of Art-Images of Female Characters in Stag 'bum rgyal's Short Story "Man rgya bha, 'Dog rgyal bha"] in Ban de mkhar བན་དེ་མཁར། (ed). *Stag 'bum rgyal gyi sgrung gtam la dpal pa ལྷག་པ་ལྷ་མ་རྒྱལ་གྱི་སྒྲུང་གཏམ་ལ་དབྱེད་པ།* [Studies of Stag 'bum rgyal's Novels]. Zi ling ཟི་ལིང། [Xining 西宁]: Mtsho snon mi rigs dpe skrun khang མཆོ་སྤྲོད་མི་རིགས་དཔེ་སྐྱུང་ཁང། [Qinghai Nationalities Press], 87-100.

Virtanen, Riika J. 2018. Ordinary Heroes and Heroines? Fictional Stories of Tibetans and Life in the Countryside in the gTsang and A mdo Regions. *Himalayan Discoveries* 2(1):59-94.
<https://bit.ly/2HqhT7V>, accessed 18 August 2019

TIBETAN TERMS

'bras spungs འབྲས་སྤྱུངས།
 'brug byams འབྲུག་བྱམས།
 a ha bo ཨ་ཏ་བོ།
 a mdo ཨ་མདོ།
 bdud lha rgyal བདུད་ལྷ་རྒྱལ།
 bkra shis dpal ldan བརྒ་ཤིས་དཔལ་ལྷན།
 bod kyi gces phrug བོད་ཀྱི་གཙུག་ལྷན།
 brtse glu བརྩེ་གླུ།
 bstan 'dzin sgron me བསྟན་འཛིན་སྒྲོན་མེ།
 chos skyong ཆོས་སྤྱོད།
 dbus gtsang དབུས་གཙང་།
 ge sar གེ་སར།
 gsal sgron གསལ་སྒྲོན།

gzi གཟི།
 khams ཁམས།
 la gzhas ལ་གཞས།
 lam gyi nyi 'od ལམ་གྱི་ཉི་འོད།
 lha byams rgyal ལྷ་བྱམས་རྒྱལ།
 lha mdzes ལྷ་མཛེས།
 lha sa ལྷ་ས།
 mar nang grong མར་ནང་གོང།
 mi 'gyur མི་འགྱུར།
 mi la tsi tsi མི་ལ་ཙི་ཙི།
 mi rigs dpe skrun khang མི་རིགས་དཔེ་སྐྱུན་ཁང།
 mi rkyang gcod pa མི་རྒྱང་གཙོད་པ།
 nyi ma don grub ཉི་མ་དོན་གུབ།
 pad ma phag mo rta mgrin པད་མ་ཕག་མོ་རྟ་མགྲིན།
 pe cing པེ་ཅིང།
 rin chen bkra shis རིན་ཆེན་བརྟ་ཤེས།
 rin chen mkhar རིན་ཆེན་མཁར།
 rmi lam རྩི་ལམ།
 rnam grol རྩམ་གྲོལ།
 rta mgrin རྟ་མགྲིན།
 sbrang char སྤང་ཆར།
 sgrol ma skyid སྒྲོལ་མ་སྦྱིད།
 skal bzang nor bu སྐལ་བཟང་ནོར་བུ།
 spo bo ral pa can སྤོ་བོ་རལ་པ་ཅན།
 stag 'bum rgyal སྟག་འབུམ་རྒྱལ།
 sum pa སུམ་པ།

thar 'phel ཐར་ཤེལ།
tshe ring rdo rje ཚེ་རིང་ར་རྟེ་རྒྱེ།
yar nang grong ཡར་ནང་གྲོང་།
zi ling ཟི་ལིང་།
zla sgron ལྷ་སྟོན།

CHINESE TERMS

Beijing 北京
Chengdu 成都
Gesang Nuobu 格桑诺布
Lasa 拉萨
Minzu chubanshe 民族出版社
Xinan minzu daxue 西南民族大学
Xining 西宁
Zhongyang minzu daxue 中央民族大学